

19. (Thrice Amended) A method of incorporating a continuous fibriform smoke-modifying element in a smoking material rod, the method, comprising:

- providing a smoking material rod-making machine;
- including a suction band in said smoking material rod making machine, said suction band having a travel direction, said suction band forming a smoking material deposition run having a start and an end;
- applying a suction force to said suction band;
- depositing particulate smoking material on said suction band along said smoking material deposition run between said start and said end of said smoking material deposition run;
- providing a continuous fibriform smoke-modifying element having a degree of rigidity at a location remote from said smoking material rod-making machine;
- providing a longitudinal feed path for said continuous fibriform smoke-modifying element to follow from said remote location to said smoking material rod-making machine, and in said smoking material rod-making machine said longitudinal feed path being in said travel direction of said smoking material deposition run of said suction band of said smoking material rod-making machine;
- feeding said continuous fibriform smoke-modifying element to said longitudinal feed path;
- causing said longitudinal feed path to be followed by said continuous fibriform smoke-modifying element to start ascending toward said suction band, under

the influence of said suction force, at a distance along said smoking material deposition run intermediate said start and end of said smoking material deposition run, said degree of rigidity of said continuous fibriform smoke-modifying element constraining said continuous fibriform smoke-modifying element from being immediately displaced upwardly toward said suction band;

supporting said continuous fibriform smoke-modifying element and maintaining said continuous fibriform smoke-modifying element at a position spaced from said suction band by said particulate smoking material deposited on said suction band before, in said travel direction, said ascending of said longitudinal feed path; and

depositing additional particulate smoking material on said suction band along said smoking material deposition run after, in said travel direction, said start of said ascending of said longitudinal feed path.

Please cancel claim 20, without prejudice.

Please amend claims 24, 25 and 26 a third time, as follows:

24. (Thrice Amended) The method according to claim 19 further including causing said feed path of said continuous fibriform smoke-modifying element to be ascending at an angle and controlling said angle of said ascending of said feed path of said continuous fibriform smoke-modifying element so that said angle of said ascending of said feed path is not more than about 5 degrees from horizontal.

25. (Thrice Amended) The method according to claim 19 further including feeding said continuous fibriform smoke-modifying element to said smoking material rod-making machine at a fixed speed in relation to a speed at which said smoking material rod-making machine is run.

26. (Thrice Amended) A method of incorporating a continuous fibriform smoke-modifying element in a smoking rod material, said method comprising:

providing a smoking material rod-making machine;

including a suction band in said smoking material rod-making machine, said suction band having a travel direction and forming a smoking material deposition run having a start and an end;

applying a suction force to said suction band;

depositing particulate smoking material on said suction band along said smoking material deposition run between said start and said end of said smoking material deposition run;

providing a continuous fibriform smoke-modifying element having a degree of rigidity at a location remote from said smoking material rod-making machine;

providing a longitudinal feed path for said continuous fibriform smoke-modifying element to follow from said remote location to said smoking material rod-making machine and in said smoking material rod-making machine, said longitudinal feed path in said smoking material rod-making machine extending in said

travel direction of said smoking material deposition run of said suction band of said smoking material rod-making machine;

providing a guide in said smoking material rod-making machine;

feeding said continuous fibriform smoke-modifying element from said location remote from said smoking material rod-making machine to said guide;

constraining said continuous fibriform smoke-modifying element by said guide in said smoking material rod-making machine to follow said longitudinal feed path spaced from said suction band and to be constrained by said guide and by said degree of rigidity against movement in response to said suction force toward said suction band until a distance along said smoking material deposition run intermediate said start and said end of said smoking material deposition run, said continuous fibriform smoke-modifying element being supported and maintained at a position spaced from said suction band by particulate smoking material deposited on said suction band before, in said travel direction, and by said guide; and

depositing additional particulate smoking material on said suction belt along said smoking material deposition run after, in said travel direction, said guide.

Please cancel claims 27 and 28, without prejudice.

Please amend claim 32, as follows:

32. (Thrice Amended) The method according to claim 26 further including feeding said continuous fibriform smoke-modifying element along said longitudinal feed path which extends beneath said smoking material deposition run at a constant vertical distance from said suction band.

Please amend claim 38, as follows:

38. (Thrice Amended) A method for incorporating a continuous fibriform smoke-modifying element in a smoking material rod, said method comprising:

providing a smoking material rod-making machine having a moving suction band having a start and an end;

exerting a suction force on said moving suction band;

using said suction force exerted on said moving suction band for supporting and transporting particulate smoking material deposited on said moving suction band;

feeding a continuous fibriform smoke-modifying element having a degree of rigidity to said smoking material rod-making machine along a longitudinal feed path from a location remote from said smoking material rod-making machine, said longitudinal feed path being generally parallel to a direction of travel of said moving suction band in said smoking material rod-making machine;

entering said continuous fibriform smoke-modifying element into said

smoking material-rod making machine along said longitudinal feed path from said remote location at a distance spaced from said moving suction band;

causing said continuous fibriform smoke-modifying element to ascend toward said moving suction band due to said suction force at a location intermediate said start and said end of said moving suction band, said degree of rigidity of said continuous fibriform smoke-modifying element constraining said continuous fibriform smoke-modifying element from being immediately displaced upwardly toward said suction band, said continuous fibriform smoke-modifying element contacting a layer of said particulate smoking material deposited on said moving suction band before said intermediate location; and

depositing additional smoking material on said moving suction band and on said continuous fibriform smoke-modifying element subsequent to said intermediate location and subsequent to said entering of said continuous fibriform smoke-modifying element into said smoking material rod machine.

Please amend claims 40-43, as follows:

40. (Twice Amended) A method of incorporating a continuous fibriform smoke-modifying element in a smoking rod material, said method comprising:

feeding longitudinally a continuous fibriform smoke-modifying element having a degree of rigidity to a smoking material rod-making machine along a feed path

from a location remote from said smoking material rod-making machine, said feed path, in said machine, extending in a travel direction of a smoking material deposition run of a suction band of said machine and said feed path, in said machine, ascending toward said smoking material deposition run;

providing a guide for said continuous fibriform smoke-modifying element in said rod making machine;

constraining said continuous fibriform smoke-modifying element by using said guide in said machine so that said continuous fibriform smoke-modifying element follows said feed path spaced from said run of said suction band and is constrained by said guide and by said degree of rigidity against a suction force exerted by said suction band and directed toward said run until at a distance along said deposition run said continuous fibriform smoke-modifying element becomes supported and is subsequently maintained at a position spaced from said run by a particulate smoking material deposited on said run; and

depositing additional smoking material on said run subsequent to said distance as which said continuous fibriform smoke-modifying element is supported by a particulate smoking material deposited on said run.

41. (Twice Amended) A method of incorporating a continuous fibriform smoke-modifying element in smoking rod material, said method comprising;
feeding longitudinally a continuous fibriform smoke-modifying element

having a degree of rigidity to a smoking material rod-making machine along a feed path from a location remote from said smoking material rod-making machine, said feed path, in said machine, extending in a travel direction of a smoking material deposition run of a suction band of said machine;

providing a guide for said continuous fibriform smoke-modifying element in said rod making machine;

constraining said continuous fibriform smoke-modifying element by using said guide in said machine so that said continuous fibriform smoke-modifying element follows said feed path spaced from said run of said suction band and is constrained by said guide and by said degree of rigidity against a suction force exerted by said suction band and directed toward said run until at a distance along said deposition run said continuous fibriform smoke-modifying element becomes supported and is subsequently maintained at a position spaced from said run by a particulate smoking material deposited on said run;

providing a streamlined fairing on said guide; and

depositing additional smoking material on said run.

42. (Twice Amended) A method of incorporating a continuous fibriform smoke-modifying element in smoking rod material, said method comprising;

feeding longitudinally a continuous fibriform smoke-modifying element having a degree of rigidity to a smoking material rod-making machine along a feed path

from a location remote from said smoking material rod-making machine, said feed path, in said machine, extending in a travel direction of a smoking material deposition run of a suction band of said machine;

providing a guide for said continuous fibriform smoke-modifying element in said rod making machine;

constraining said continuous fibriform smoke-modifying element by using said guide in said machine so that said continuous fibriform smoke-modifying element follows said feed path spaced from said run of said suction band and is constrained by said guide and by said degree of rigidity against a suction force exerted by said suction band and directed toward said run until at a distance along said deposition run said continuous fibriform smoke-modifying element becomes supported and is subsequently maintained at a position spaced from said run by a particulate smoking material having a flow path and being deposited on said run;

enlarging said flow path of said particulate smoking material in a vicinity of said guide; and

depositing additional smoking material on said run.

43. (Twice Amended) A method of incorporating a continuous fibriform smoke-modifying element in smoking rod material, said method comprising:

feeding longitudinally a continuous fibriform smoke-modifying element having a degree of rigidity to a smoking material rod-making machine along a feed path

from a location remote from said smoking material rod-making machine, said feed path, in said machine, extending in a travel direction of a smoking material deposition run of a suction band of said machine, said suction band being provided with a suction force;

providing a guide for said continuous fibriform smoke-modifying element in said rod making machine;

constraining said continuous fibriform smoke-modifying element by using said guide in said machine so that said continuous fibriform smoke-modifying element follows said feed path spaced from said run of said suction band and is constrained by said guide and by said degree of rigidity against said suction force toward said run until at a distance along said deposition run said continuous fibriform smoke-modifying element becomes supported and is subsequently maintained at a position spaced from said run by a particulate smoking material deposited on said run;

varying said suction force at said portion of said smoking material deposition run adjacent said guide relative to said suction force over a remainder of said smoking material deposition run; and

depositing additional smoking material on said run.

Marked-up copies of these amended claims are enclosed for the Examiner's review.

Please add new claims 44-47, as follows:

44. (New) The method of claim 19 further including providing said continuous fibriform smoke-modifying element wound on a spool.
45. (New) The method of claim 44 further including providing a brake system intermediate said spool and said smoking material rod-making machine and using said braking system for regulating a speed of feeding said continuous fibriform smoke-modifying element from said spool to said smoking material rod-making machine.
46. (New) The method of claim 19 further including providing cooperating feed rollers at said location remote from said smoking material rod-making machine and using said feed rollers for feeding said continuous fibriform smoke-modifying element to said longitudinal feed path.
47. (New) The method of claim 26 further including providing said guide tube having a portion outside of said smoking material rod-making machine.

REMARKS

The courtesies extended to the undersigned by Examiner Mark Halpern during the interview held April 17, 2003 are acknowledged and appreciated. Applicant, his